To: United Nation Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Bulletin 2016

Subject: Informative Article "Protecting Internally Displaced Afghans from Harsh Cold Winter through UN funded-Winterization Cash Assistance 2015"

Purpose: *this article is prepared for publication to* ***UN-OCHA*** *monthly humanitarian Bulletin with the aim to enhance the visibility of western region humanitarian issues and illustrate an image on needs and gaps for extending protection efforts towards vulnerable human, suffering from coldness and chronic poverty in WR of Afghanistan.*

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CC: *ARAA site office Ghor, UNHCR SOH, WFP, UNICEF, IRC, IDP Task force, ACBAR, DoE and DoRRs.*

About ARAA: Ansari Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan-ARAA is national NGO working in western region of Afghanistan since 1992 focusing in the sector of emergency, social activities agriculture and education has been in partnership with UNHCR-Afghanistan since 2002 for more info please visit www.araa-af.com

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Protection of IDPs from harsh cold winter through "winterization cash assistance"

Funded by: UNHCR Sub-Office Herat, Afghanistan

A. Abstract

Displacement deprives Internally Displaced Persons IDPs from access to basic humanitarian services, the urgent and priority needs of both conflicts and naturally affected IDPs, after displacements, are the protection services through emergency response and assistance such as food, safe portable water and non-food items (NFIs) i.e. shelter, tents, warm clothes and in long run access to livelihood source.

The main challenges for returnees, IDPs /deported Afghan families are lack of accommodation and job opportunity. Living under tents in cold and hot weather, suffering hunger, disease and deprivation of their children from education, the Afghan IDPs who are not assisted by the UN and other Aid organizations suffer from tremendous turmoil in lack of access to heating arrangement's and warm clothes in winter season.

Fortunately, UNHCR Afghanistan, UNOCHA and other UN sister agencies have their continued presence some of them like UNHCR having winterization assistance program prior approaching harsh coldness of weather.

The overall aim is to alleviate sufferings of concerned IDPs who are needy of the neediest to the possible extent to rescue their lives and help to increase their coping mechanism.

In 2015, ANSARI REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION FOR AFGHANISTAN (ARAA) working in partnership cooperation with UNHCR about than one and half decades, the same as previous years undertook responsibility to implement winterization cash assistance for 1100 vulnerable IDP families of UNHCR/MoRR people of concern within Herat and Ghor Provinces and other people in needs such as returnees/ deportees as well as IDPs in other WR region provinces such as Farah, Badghis will be covered by other partners of UNHCR as well.

B. Target allocation

A total of 950 vulnerable displaced IDP families and 150 Persons with specific protection needs are targeted that will be assisted with winterization assistance this year Herat and Ghor through ARAA.

Province	*No. of IDP families*	*Total per province**	*Per family*
Herat	*650*	*US$ 65,000*	*100 US$*
PSN in Herat	*150*	*US$ 1,5000*	*100 US$*
Ghor	*300*	*US$ 30,000*	*100 US$*

Total	***1,100***	***US$ 110.000***	***Mostly conflict induced IDPs***

C. Implementation arrangements:

Cash assistance US$ 100 will be exchanged to Afs and will be distributed to targeted vulnerable displaced family in the amount would help the beneficiaries to procure relief items to help them cope with the harsh winter according to their own choices. US$ 100 enables the beneficiaries to procure heating materials, warm clothes, housing needs, blankets among others to the minimal scale to save their life. Based on the lessons learn, this cash method will empower beneficiaries and allow them to choose the items themselves. It is also more cost-efficient and operational/ transactional costs were minimal.

D. Distribution Timeline:

The entire period of implementation is considered one month, however the primary identification of vulnerable beneficiaries have been started since start of Nov and it is expected that entire activity to be smoothly accomplished before end of December. in Ghor the entire selection is completed and in Herat it will be finished up to 10th December 2015.

This activity also passed all coordination steps through provincial governor and departments of Refugees and Repatriations under leadership of UNHCR and close coordination of UNOCHA operational coordination teams.

E. Beneficiary selection criteria, distribution method and Monitoring:

IDPs of 2015 and few families of last year or before and who are living in tents, makeshift shelters and who are vulnerable and those who already assessed in participatory manner by IDP Task force humanitarian actors that their cases had been registered with UNHCR and DoRR are in priority.

UNHCR
UNHCR CASH ASSISTANCE FOR WINTERIZATION 2015
HERAT - AFGHANISTAN
کمک نقدی یونچسیار برای زمستان سال ۱۳۹۴ ولایت هرات
In Coordination With:
به همکاری:
- DoRR Herat
- ARAA
- ریاست عودت مهاجرین
- موسسه احیای مجدد انصاری برای افغانستان
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ARAA conducted a participatory needs assessment within the targeted areas to identify and list the vulnerable beneficiaries.

PSN cases also identified through ARAA that assessed by UNHCR-PSN network of service providers during 2015.

For transparency and accountability a committee was established in each of the targeted locations with guidance from UNHCR. The committee monitored the selection of vulnerable beneficiaries and will be monitoring the cash distribution.

The composition of the committee includes the provincial DoRR representatives and local authorities from the district, members of the Community Development Council (CDC) or village Shura (committee of elders, women and trustees), representatives from ARAA and from UNHCR (including female staff).

a coupon for each target beneficiary was designed by ARAA in consultation with UNHCR staff. Beneficiaries' entitlement was clearly indicated on the coupon.

Priority will be given to the most vulnerable IDPs as per the criteria stipulated.

As usual practices UNHCR and DoRR, OCT members of UNOCHA will be involved in monitoring of, distribution and post-distribution of the winterization assistance to:

- ✓ ***Monitor of the distribution process.***
- ✓ ***Verify the amount of cash provided.***

- ✓ ***Report problems encountered during the distribution.***
- ✓ ***Engage in the post-distribution monitoring of the assistance.***

F. Humanitarian Needs & Gaps in Western Region in winter 2015.

1) ***By and large, based on the statistics in regional IDP policy workshop (Sep 2015) western region is hosting near 230,000 IDPs, out of which 55% of them are in Herat Province that majority of IDPs are settled in Maslakh and Shaidayee in Enjil district and its vicinity, where the existing program will be able to cover only the most vulnerable IDPs to the minimal extent.***
2) ***During 2015 ARAA in participation of humanitarian agencies assessed above 210 huge IDP caseloads referred by DoRR-Herat, out of these about 30 caseloads 14.5 % (needy of the neediest) can be covered under the existing program.***
3) ***In Ghor also during 2015 the numbers of assessed families have reached above 1000 families while ARAA +ACF are covering around 700 families for winterization.***
4) ***Based on the info of provincial Departments of Refugees and Repatriations-DoRRs, everyday hundreds of vulnerable protracted IDPs vulnerable host community those who are not covered, suffering from chronic poverty increasing their demands for winter assistance and concerned that are prone to coldness and extreme winter, but due to limited resource there is no other measures to cover such categories.***

5) ***Based on OCT meeting minute conducted in by UNOCHA in Ghor, Since the winter in the province is too harsh and extremely cold, providing US$100 cash is not adequate in meeting entire needs of the humanitarian caseloads. OCT members recommended US$200 as comprehensive enough to meet the expected requirements; this will translate to Afs 12,000. This level of assistance helps vulnerable households to cover: three blankets, 1 baby winter cloth, 1 child winter cloth, 1 stove (Bukhari), one month fuel cost for Bukhari, and three cover plastic sheets for windows plus its attachments.***

6) ***The lessons learn from post monitoring of 2014 "Spending Pattern on Winterization Cash Assistance performed by shelter and NFI cluster coordinator" indicated that, due to extreme chronic poverty, on average 73% of cash distributed in Herat and 60% of cash distributed in Ghor have been utilized for buying food, this issue gives a hints that beside warm cloths and heating arrangements, food is also a priority for IDPs in winter, the gap in WR is that due to limited humanitarian resource in 2015, there is no general food distribution mechanism in winter for those who are receiving cash for winter simultaneously.***

G. Other Recommendations :

7) ***The lessons learned from assessment and FDGs conducted through ARAA and WASH cluster in Jan 2015 in WR also indicates that winter and freezing cold weather add to the complexity of other IDP challenges particularly they have no facility on preserving water or worming water for wash purposes during snow falls or extreme freezing weather.***
8) ***In general there is a need for every humanitarian actors as well as respective UN clusters closely working with UNOCHA to have specific pre-paredness for protecting IDPs and extremely vulnerable communities against harsh cold winter every year particularly for IDP production and IDP hosting provinces like WR of Afghanistan.***
9) ***in addition to the IDP agenda, UNOCHA as key lifesaving coordinating body together with government of Afghanistan to seek possibility of advocating for the needs of other marginalized vulnerable groups suffering from chronic poverty and prone to coldness in winter season Such as drug addicted families, labor families, protracted IDPs and extremely vulnerable community living in mix condition with IDPs particularly those who are marginalized at informal settlements in Afghanistan.***

H. External Links /Resources :

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0BxTxSHVl8A56aEtuMjFpVVhQbjg/view?ts=5661d949

About the author of this informative article:

Brief Biography copied from Profile document of UNHCR partner-ARAA published in its web site.

Sebghatullah Habibi currently works in the position of Program Manager for UNHCR-partner, Ansari Rehabilitation Association for Afghanistan –ARAA and mange one of the key programs of IDP protection team lead in western part of Afghanistan.

He was born in 1986 in western part, Herat province /Afghanistan. Graduated from High School in 1998. Entered medical Institute of Herat in 1999 and graduated as Assistant Doctor in 2001. Mr.Habibi has 3 academic degrees (A) health sector from Ghazanfar Medical Institute of Herat, (B) Business Professional degree from Afghan German Business Management College (C) leadership Development Diploma degree from Morning Star Development Institute as well as international certificate on participatory community development as JICA trainee from Japan government and Certificate on safety in the filed operating in the complex environment from Thailand.

Since 2002 Mr. Habibi has the background of working for refugees and returnees with **Medicines Sans Frontiers** and **UNHCR**. He joined ARAA last quarter of 2003 as supply chain, language Assistant to Admin /Finance office, project translator, and worked in this position for 4 years. In 2006 he was promoted to the position of Admin/Finance manager and since June 2010 as ARAA Program Officer in western region and continues to work in this capacity. Mr. Habibi manages most of ARAA fundraising, donor communication and program activities. He has excellent knowledge of English, Dari, and Pashto languages and computer programs. He had received **above 40 training and TOT workshops in Protection, Do-No-Harm, Admin, Finance, Project Management, Proposal Writing, and Strategic Planning, in the Japan, China, Pakistan, Thailand, Kabul and other cities of Afghanistan**. Mr.Sebghatullah Habibi under took risk to serve humanity particularly in conflict induced IDPs protection, where success stories are documented in organization.

Since 2013, Mr.Habibi has joined to membership of Rotary international club where he dedicates daily 1-1,5 hour of his time and money for deprived persons and voluntarily works in his society. He is currently voluntary in charge of Administrative/secretary of Rotary International in Herat Province of Afghanistan.